

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Figures 1-3 are amended above to include the designation “(Prior Art)”.

Two sheets of drawings showing the requested changes to Figures 1-3 are attached at Appendix A of this Reply.

Clean copies of the two sheets of drawings including the requested changes to Figures 1-3 and identified as “Replacement Sheets” are attached at Appendix B of this Reply.

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are amended above to overcome the examiner's claim objections and, in the case of claim 1, to provide antecedent basis for certain claim terms. Figures 1-3 are amended to include the designation "(Prior Art)". No new matter is added to the application by way of these amendments.

The examiner's objections and rejections are overcome or they are traversed as set forth below.

I. THE DRAWING OBJECTIONS

The examiner objected to Figures 1-3 because they do not include the legend "Prior Art"

The examiner's objection is overcome by amending each of Figures 1-3 to include the designation "Prior Art". Marked up versions of Figures 1-3 showing the proposed figure amendments are found at Appendix A of this Reply. "Replacement Sheets" for Figures 1-3 are found at Appendix B of this Reply.

II. THE CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The examiner objected to claims 1-10 for using the term "characterized" in conjunction with the recitation of a method.

Claim 1 is amended above to replace the term "characterized in that" with the term "comprising". Claims 2-10 are amended above to replace the term "characterized in that" with the term "wherein".

III. THE SECTION 112, 2nd PARAGRAPH REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-10

The examiner rejected claims 1-10 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph for being indefinite. In particular, the examiner objected to the lack of antecedent basis for the limitations "the dark spots" and "the bright spots" recited in claim 1.

The examiner's rejections are overcome by amending claim 1 to delete the word "the" where it precedes the term "dark spots" and "bright spots".

IV. THE TRAVERSE OF THE OBVIOUSNESS REJECTION

The examiner rejected claims 1-9 for being obvious over Wong et al. (6,217,175) in view of Yamazaki et al. (2004/0224449). The examiner also rejected claim 10 for being obvious over Wong et al. in view of Yamazaki et al. and further in view of the applicant's admission. Claims 1-10 are nonobvious and patentable over the prior art recited by the examiner for at least the reasons recited below.

Claims 1-10 are nonobvious over the cited prior art at least because the prior art does not disclose or suggest the feature of claim 1 that "a laser beam selectively scans and irradiates the reflective bodies at an incident angle, so that the irradiated surfaces of the reflected bodies are vaporized to form rough surfaces, while nonirradiated surfaces of the reflective bodies are still of reflective surfaces". This feature of claim 1 is important as it allows a pattern to be formed by a laser through the combination of dark spots and bright spots that may be observed by the viewer as a mark.

It is the examiner's position that the feature of claim 1 recited above is disclosed in Yamazaki et al. and specifically by the disclosure that the laser beam in Yamazaki et al. passes through a lens (207) into a receptive surface member (304) with an incident angle in the range of 45 to 90° **to defuse a laser beam for efficiently forming uneven surface on the receptive surface.** (See paragraph 59 of Yamazaki et al.) (emphasis added). The feature of Yamazaki et al. discussed in paragraph 59 is not the claim feature recited above. Instead, paragraph 59 of Yamazaki et al. discloses a method whereby an uneven portion of a reflective member is formed to diffuse the laser beam. However, the uneven portion itself **is not formed by the laser beam.** In other words, Yamazaki et al. discloses an uneven surface that changes the path of the laser light. It does not disclose using a laser beam to form any thing. For this reason the recited prior art does not disclose every feature of independent claim 1 and claims 1-10 are non-obviouse and patentable.

Pending application claims 1-10 are also nonobvious over the prior art because one of ordinary of skill in the art at the time of the invention would not have considered Yamazaki et al. when solving the problems faced by the inventors. The present application is directed to methods for producing a visible mark on reflective materials using laser beams. In contrast, Yamazaki et al. is directed to annealing a semiconductor film with the use of a laser light. One

of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would not have considered semiconductor annealing prior art in solving problems related to methods for producing visible marks on reflective material. For this reason, claims 1-10 are non-obvious and patentable over the cited prior art.

CONCLUSION

Pending application claims 1-10 are believed to be patentable for the reasons recited above. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of all pending application claims is therefore courteously solicited.

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By: A. Blair Hughes/
A. Blair Hughes
Reg. No. 32,901
312-913-2123
hughes@mbhb.com

Appendix A

(Marked Up Sheets For Figures 1-3)

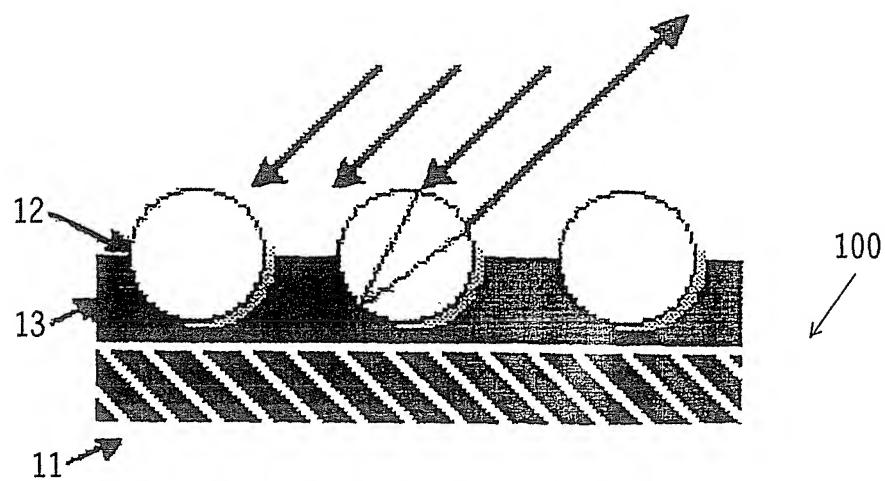


Fig.1

(PRIOR ART)

ADD
DESIGNATION

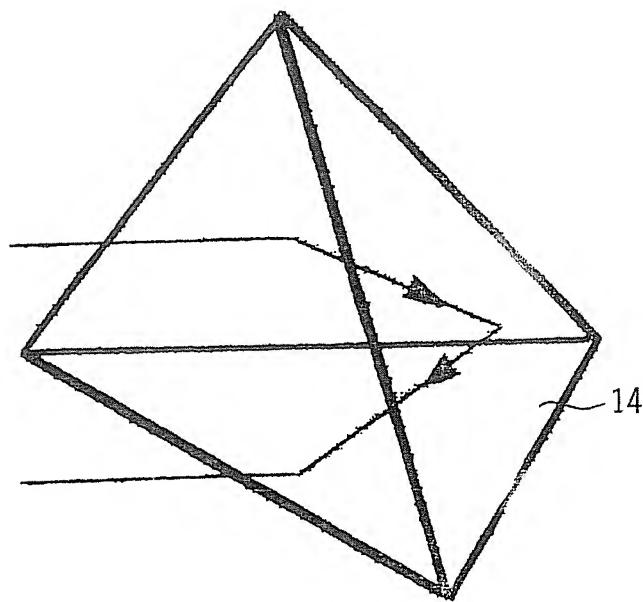


Fig.2

(PRIOR ART)

ADD
DESIGNATION

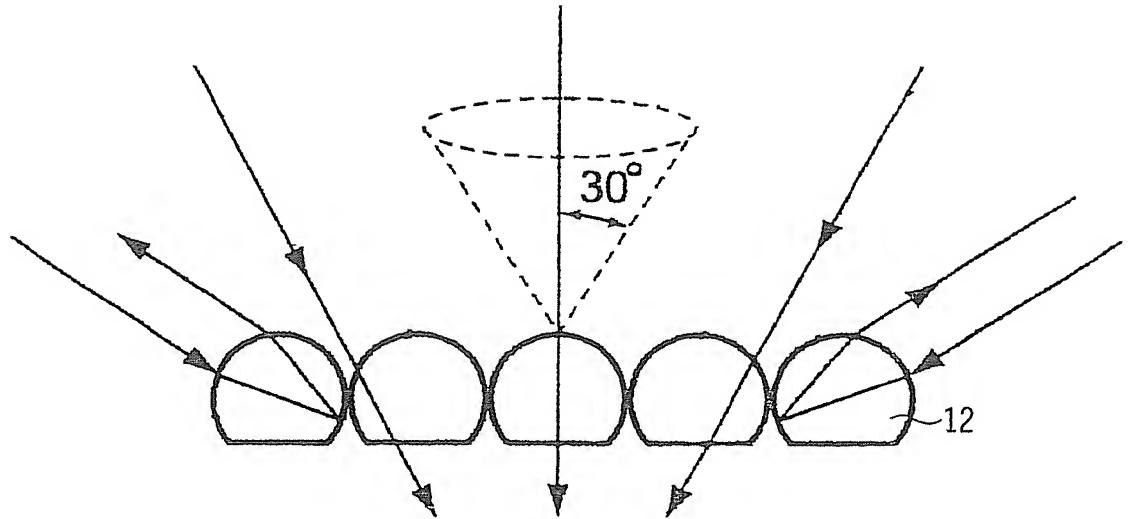


Fig.3
(Muon Arr)

ADD
DESIGNATION

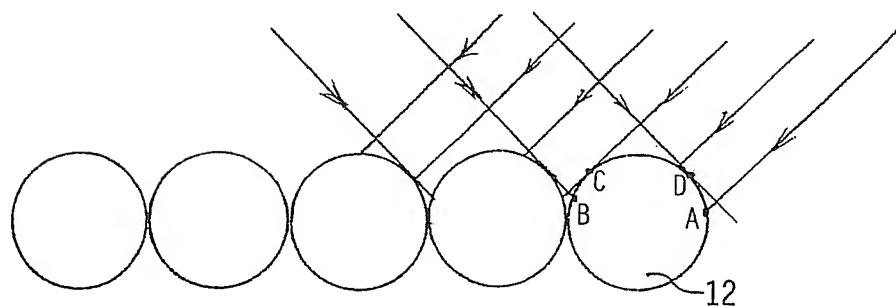


Fig.4

Appendix B

(Replacement Sheets For Figures 1-3)